

I support media diversity

I am writing to address my concerns regarding Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. I am a graduate student in a critical media studies program and work with some of the top undergraduate students in the country. Having a diverse, competitive, and locally cogent media environment is crucial to any student's development as an informed, critically conscious citizen. I strongly feel that the FCC should continue to support all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest and the education of future citizens by distributing market power more broadly and curbing the growth of monopolistically minded companies in the broadcast industry.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you,

Sincerely,
Mary L. Gray
Ph.D. candidate
UC San Diego, CA